

Michigan Wildlife Council

MINUTES October 17, 2016

A special Sportsmen's Reception with the Michigan Wildlife Council was held Monday, October 17, 2016 at Jay's Sporting Goods, 8800 South Clare Avenue, Clare, Michigan 48617.

Present for the Michigan Wildlife Council

Merisa Campbell
Jim Hammill
Matt Pedigo
Jeff Poet
Carol Rose
Ed Roy
Henry Stancato
Randy Stec

Called to Order

Vice Chairperson **Poet** started the meeting at 6:08 p.m. by welcoming the attendees and introduced the Michigan Wildlife Council (MWC) members who were present.

Chairperson **Pedigo** introduced Representative Jon Bumstead, Representative Joel Johnson and Department of Natural Resources Director Keith Creagh. Representative Bumstead and Director Creagh spoke briefly to the attendees.

Güd Marketing Presentation

Chelsea Maupin, research manager with Güd Marketing, reviewed the strategy that underlines the campaign which is to educate the 47 percent of the general public who are either neutral or moderately approve of hunting and fishing. The first year we set the foundation which started in April. The goal was to make the MWC a credible source and set the stage for acceptance. It is a five year campaign that will attract, inform, engage and encourage our target audience.

Emmie Musser, media director and **Andrea Ness**, outreach and engagement director with Güd Marketing reviewed the launch of the campaign explaining how time was taken to understand the research and to make sure we are responsible and prudent stewards of the funds. The campaign capitalizes on key seasons and focuses outdoor advertising in the summer and television in the winter. Additionally, the campaign is reaching digital and social media platforms. Pandora was the top referral to the website and the MWC content is the top content sponsor in the Detroit Free Press, which is a great partnership. Our target audience (those who are neutral or moderately approve) are engaging at a greater rate than expected.

The next phase in the campaign is to build a broad connection to hunting and fishing and how it relates to wildlife management. Upcoming topics will include: On the Ground efforts with MUCC, Michigan Operation Freedom Outdoors, wild turkeys and Michigan Sportsmen against Hunger.

Questions / Public Comment

Chairperson **Pedigo** called for questions and public comment at 6:50 p.m.

How are you going to measure the success?

A baseline survey will be completed every year. We will resurvey to see what has changed, what messages are connecting. We are also gathering information from digital platforms which helps determine how much we can say and who we can say it to.

Merle Shephard – who does the baseline survey?

Partner in Farmington Hills

Steve – has there been any push back or negative comments?

No, we haven't had any push back or negative comments which tells us that we can dig deeper and move a little faster. We are doing our best to target the market and focus and introduce the message to the audience.

Sportsmen's groups - why aren't there dead things or guns?

That is not what our target audience wants to see. They are not ready for that but they are learning and engaging.

How can major stakeholders take more active role? UPCAC completed a preliminary study and are seeing the same results – so how do we tie into this and work in the same direction? Can we share messaging and communicate with Gūd Marketing?

The data shows there are misunderstandings among sportsmen. Yes, Gūd Marketing would like to have that conversation with UPCAC and find a way to work together.

Is there going to be any thrust with this group – voting in scientific management - bringing in wildlife management as a scientific management – how is it actually being done?

We tell them in a way they will remember the story instead of just facts: volunteering, broad advertising, a new TV commercial. It is the same process on the website - generic phasing which then allows them to control the path of how deep they dive.

Mike Avery – I have heard some negative comments and when I communicated the reasons and purpose they understood. Will it ever get to the smiling kid over a dead deer with gun?

We just had kid with dead turkeys (Poet heritage story) but we want to grow support and it probably will not be with that image.

Proposal G – making people interested in something they are not interested in is pretty hard – to win a campaign in MI you have to win SE Michigan – Bumstead

Representative Johnson – soft selling is a good way and I hope we can progress as time goes on – we are promoting what it really is and things like the wolf hunt people do not understand.

Carol Rose – we learned a lot from the Colorado Wildlife Council and showing those images did not resonate. We are grateful of what they went through so we could hit the ground running.

Representative Bumstead – Three years ago the DNR took over and turned Belle Isle into a State Park. There are now over three million visitors. Kudos to the Director and Parks.

The Belle Isle story was #2 hit

Amy Trotter – campaign metrics with this campaign versus others you've worked on and if you had \$200,000 more how you would apply that?

Comparison to other campaigns: Message soft, brand new, yes we did well - also look at investment made and typically on campaign if you hit 20% value added – we hit 53% free – they got behind the message and agree with it

If we had more money: we have a long wish list and will talk to council about it tomorrow. We need to stay disciplined though and we are at the “attract and inform” stage and if we skip that we will lose the target audience.

Andrea Ness – one thing we noticed is that this is the first time many organizations have had a platform to tell their stories.

Most of the messages I saw were geared towards hunting. If 7 percent hunt and a greater percent (10) fish, wouldn't a kid standing with a stringer of bluegill be okay to show and don't we have fisheries in both the southwest and southeast - if we want to attract the Detroit area isn't it more fishing over hunting?

We have introduced fishing. Most people under 30 in focus groups didn't know what angling meant. Hunting is an easier connecting point at this time in the campaign.

Mike Andrews – Michigan has had a highly successful advertising campaign, Pure Michigan. Is there any way to tie in with them?

Quite possibly. We have been talking with them and can definitely see something in the future. We currently meet and talk with them regularly. We wanted to make sure messages are not competing against each other. Their target audience is outside of Michigan. We do share each other's social posts and Pure MI has helped us.

Pedigo – The campaign is starting to have an effect. People want to get involved. They see the messages and it is working. They are writing in to find out how to get involved with the MWC and volunteer time.

Closing Speaker – Mike Avery

Pedigo introduced Mike Avery and explained how he has done a lot for us by helping to get our message out to the hunters and anglers.

Mike Avery spoke for a bit and stated he wanted to be involved on statewide level to promote the history of our outdoor lifestyle. He never would have dreamed he would have to fight to protect our way of life. That is the reason he does the radio show – to promote, protect and encourage people to get involved in an outdoor life style. Most of his audience is hardcore anglers, hunters, shooters and trappers. What we post online gets people's attention. The goal is to get advocates to make the pictures pretty - wipe the blood from mouth and push tongue back in. Need to be portrayed as the honorable, law abiding folks we are.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

APPROVED: Date _____

Matt Pedigo, Chairperson
Michigan Wildlife Council